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SECOND EXTENSION OF THE THIRD COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Note by the Administrator

I. JUSTIFICATION

1. The third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda (1992-1996) was approved by the Governing Council at its thirty-ninth session in March 1992. The Government requested a one-year extension of the programme, through December 1997, which the Administrator granted and of which he informed the Executive Board accordingly at its third regular session 1997. The Government has requested a further one-year extension of the third country programme to delineate the focus and extent of the new programme areas for UNDP support and to finalize its national economic development plan.

2. The Government has identified capacity-building in development planning and management as a priority area for UNDP support under the proposed country cooperation framework (CCF). The first extension of the third country programme was granted to assist the Government in formulating a comprehensive development plan. UNDP and the Government are still discussing the precise modalities for advancing this initiative, including identification of the key elements of an appropriate development framework and the relative priorities to be assigned to them. It is expected that a decision on strategy and methodology will be reached during the first quarter of 1998, leading to the implementation of UNDP support for formulation of the plan during the remainder of the extension period. The additional one-year extension will therefore facilitate the definition of the proposed development plan, the identification of funding sources, and the finalization of the CCF. It is expected that the development plan will act as a catalyst for the return of traditional donor support.

II. OBJECTIVES

3. Antigua and Barbuda's Medium-Term Economic Strategy (1996-2000) identifies the following key national priorities: (a) protection of the country's environment and natural resources; (b) public sector reform; and (c) economic management.

4. In the fifth cycle, environmental issues were being addressed under the physical planning and environment management project. Implementation of this project has been delayed because of weak institutional arrangements and the high rate of turnover of project personnel. These weaknesses were addressed during the first extension of the country programme. The final project review has been concluded and the project will end in March 1998. The second extension will also allow Government time to further advance actions relating to the creation of an effective public sector, including a commitment to improve fiscal management and rationalize the operations of public services, through ongoing public sector reform measures. The deployment of human resources will form a critical part of this activity.

5. Economic management continues to be a priority for Antigua and Barbuda given the country's slow growth rate and debt-servicing obligations. Activities to be undertaken during the period of the second extension will include a UNDP-supported needs assessment of the economic sector. A common country assessment (CCA) for Antigua and Barbuda is being prepared and will be finalized in 1998. Antigua and Barbuda has also agreed to the elaboration of a country strategy note (CSN), an exercise planned for 1998. The CCA, the CSN and other initiatives listed above will inform the final formulation of the CCF which will also take into account Government's current efforts within the context of the ongoing structural adjustment reforms and review of national goals and priorities.

III. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

6. During the additional one-year period of the second extension, the following activities will be undertaken:

(a) Ongoing programme activities under the physical planning and environment management project will be concluded by March 1998. An integrated land-use plan comprising key economic, social and environmental information will be completed and a Geographic Information System will be established in Government;

(b) Consultations with the Government will continue in order to arrive at consensus on the nature and form of future UNDP support and the elaboration of the development plan. Once this has been secured, UNDP will organize joint missions of donor agencies to assist the Government in mobilizing resources in support of sectoral needs and priorities;

(c) UNDP will assist the Government in the design and establishment of an appropriate institutional structure that will integrate the planning process and ensure its sustainability.

7. The Government has made a commitment to completing the activities listed above with UNDP support during the first half of 1998. At the end of the period of the second extension, the first CCF for Antigua and Barbuda, which will clearly delineate the scope of the proposed economic development planning and management programme, will have been formulated.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

8. The Administrator recommends that the Executive Board approve the extension of the third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda for a period of one year, through December 1998.

Annex

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION TARGET TABLE FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA (1997-1998)

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Source	Amount	Comments
UNDP CORE FUNDS		
Estimated IPF carry-over	402	
TRAC 1.1.1	80	Assigned immediately to country.
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.
SPPD/STS	-	
Subtotal	482[a]	
NON-CORE FUNDS		
Government cost-sharing	-	
Sustainable development funds	-	
Third-party cost-sharing	-	
Funds, trust funds and other	-	
Subtotal	-	
GRAND TOTAL	482[a]	

[a] Not inclusive of TRAC 1.1.2, which is allocated regionally for subsequent country application.

Abbreviations: IPF = indicative planning figure; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; and TRAC = target for resource assignment from the core.